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Chalmette Unit Jean Lafitte...

amendment to the general management plan
development concept plan

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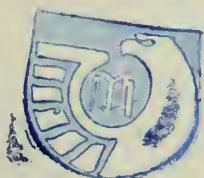
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CHALMETTE UNIT
JEAN LAFITTE



NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK / LOUISIANA



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AMENDMENT TO THE
GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN/DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN

Chalmette Unit
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve
St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana

April 1990

U.S. Department of the Interior / National Park Service



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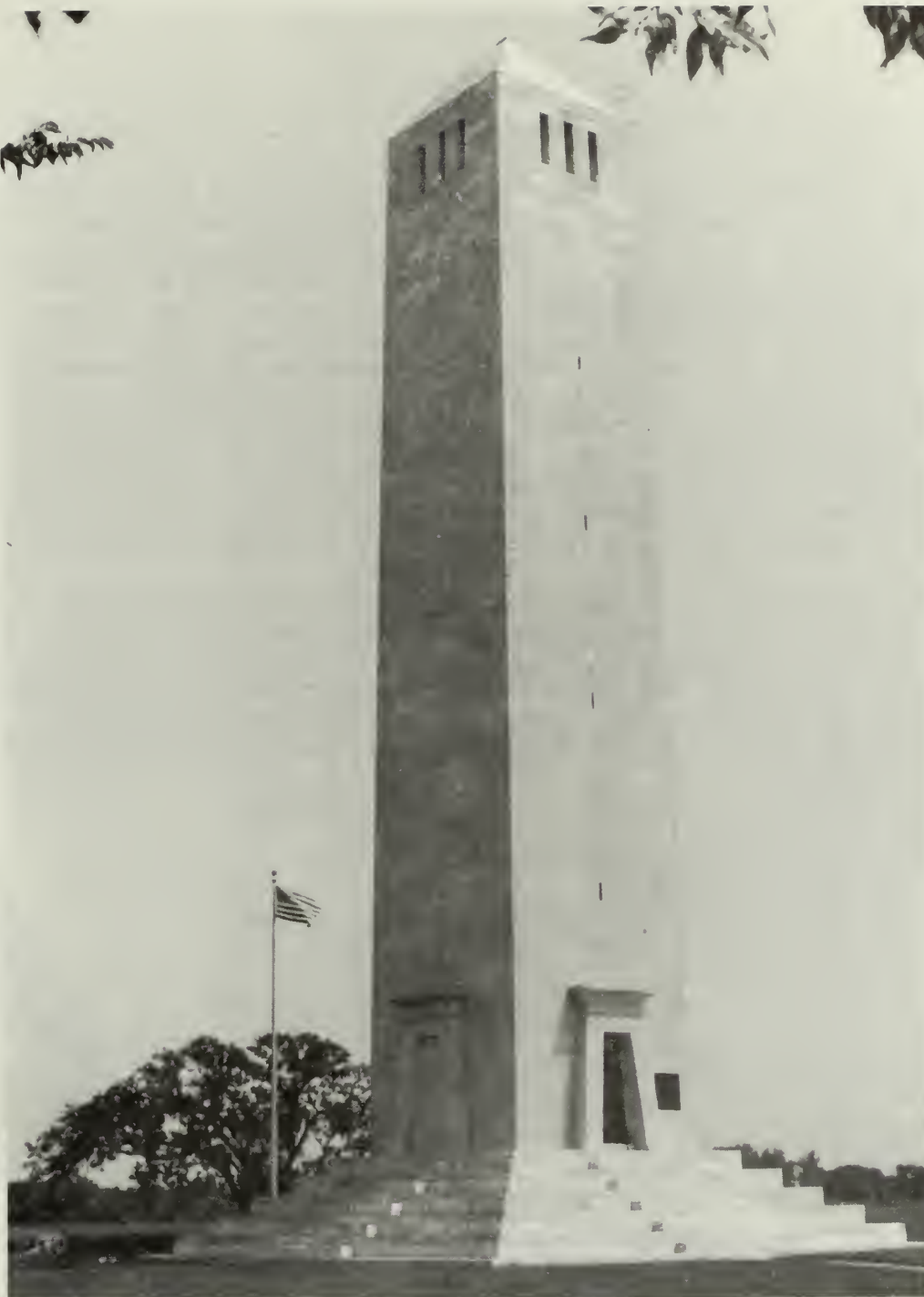
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INTRODUCTION

This document amends the general management plan/development concept plan (GMP/DCP) approved in April 1982 for Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. Only the proposals associated with the Chalmette Unit are being amended. Similarly, the Interpretive Prospectus, approved in May 1983, will be amended to reflect the proposals contained in this document. Some additional site-specific replanning for interpretation will also be required.

BACKGROUND

During routine archeological clearance initiated by the National Park Service (NPS) prior to construction of an interpretive structure at the Chalmette Unit, field surveys resulted in discovery of building foundation remnants and associated historic trash deposits. The foundations proved to be that of two houses associated with the Rodriguez Estate, a country home extant at the time of the Battle of New Orleans. Subsequent research and archeological surveys conducted in 1984 and 1985 have revealed an eighteenth-century Spanish Colonial plantation house to the north of the Rodriguez House, plus several outbuildings from both the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and a discrepancy in the alignment of features along the north-south axis of the battlefield. Site locations identified by historians and archeologists shifted the battlefield approximately 600 feet north from the locations projected in the mid-1930s upon which existing interpretation is based.

Seventeen battlefield features significant to re-interpretation of the battlefield were studied and located through archeological survey or from maps and coinciding anomalies on the ground (See the Historical Base Map.). The features were then ranked in order of the researchers' confidence in their projected locations, with locations verified by archeological survey ranked highest. Following are the seventeen features and their ranking by order of confidence:

First Order of Confidence

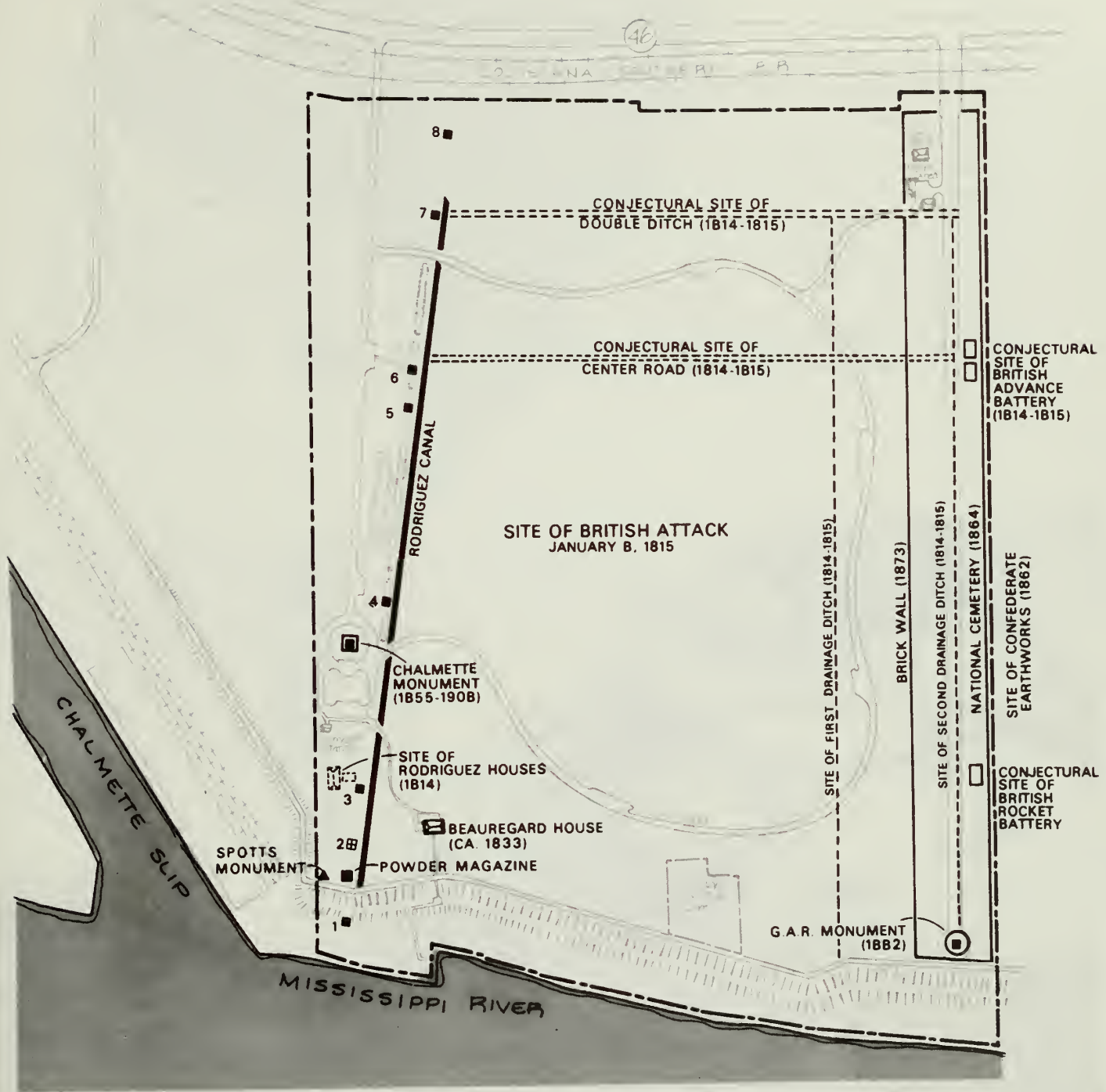
- Rodriguez House (two structures)
- American battery No. 3
- Eighteenth-century Spanish Colonial plantation house

Second Order of Confidence

- British advance battery
- Center road
- American batteries 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, & 8
- Powder magazine
- 1815 shoreline

Third Order of Confidence

- Double Ditch
- First drainage ditch
- Second drainage ditch



HISTORICAL BASE MAP

CHALMETTE UNIT
JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

National Park Service archeologists and historians utilized the realigned battlefield features to position British troop movements of the December 28, 1814; January 1, 1815; and January 8, 1815 battles. Three British troop movement corridors were identified within the park boundary (See the Engagement of January 8, 1815 troop movement map.). The first corridor, along a portion of the levee road, was the route of Lieutenant Colonel Rennie's movements against the American redoubt in advance of battery 1. A second corridor, the route of Major General Keane, traverses the battlefield obliquely from the southeast quadrant toward batteries 7 and 8 on the American line. The route of Major General Gibbs' advances against the American line is identified by a third corridor that covers an area from the projected locations of the British advance battery, Center Road, and Double Ditch toward American batteries 7 and 8.



LOUISIANA
MILITIA
RESERVES

ENCAMPMENT AREA
UNDER PROTECTION

JACKSON'S HEADQUARTERS

BLANCHARD 4
Erected after
Jan. 8th E

OF
VENUE
STATION
LOADINGS

26 PDRS
7th U.S. Inf

BATTERY EMPLACEMENT

AMERICAN

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> HUMPHREY
2-12 PDRS
1 HOWITZER | 6 <input type="checkbox"/> GARRIGUES
1-18 PDRS
1-6 PDRS |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> NORRIS
1-24 PDRS | 7 <input type="checkbox"/> SPOTTS
1-18 PDRS
1-6 PDRS |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> YOUNG/BELUCHE
2-24 PDRS | 8 <input type="checkbox"/> HARRISON
1 HOWITZER |
| 4 <input type="checkbox"/> CRAWLEY
1-32 PDRS | |
| 5 <input type="checkbox"/> PERRY
1-12 PDRS
1-6 PDRS | |

BRITISH

- ☐ BATTERY
- ☐ REDOUBT (APPROXIMATE LOCATION)

APPROXIMATELY
200 YARDS

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ENGAGEMENT OF JANUARY 8, 1815
NEW ORLEANS CAMPAIGN 1814-1815
TROOP MOVEMENT

CHALMETTE UNIT
N LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



BATTERY EMPLACEMENT

AMERICAN

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1 HUMPHREY
2-12 PDRS
1 HDWITZER | 6 GARRIGUES
1-18 PDRS
1-6 PDRS |
| 2 NORRIS
1-24 PDRS | 7 SPOTTS
1-18 PDRS
1-6 PDRS |
| 3 YOUX/BELUCHE
2-24 PDRS | 8 HARRISON
1 HDWITZER |
| 4 CRAWLEY
1-32 PDRS | |
| 5 PERRY
1-12 PDRS
1-6 PDRS | |

BRITISH

- BATTERY
- REDDOBT (APPROXIMATE LOCATION)

AREA OF
BIENVENU
PLANTATION
BUILDINGS

APPROXIMATELY
200 YARDS

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CHALMETTE UNIT

JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

ENGAGEMENT OF JANUARY 8, 1815
NEW ORLEANS CAMPAIGN 1814-1815
TROOP MOVEMENT

VISITOR USE PLAN

GOALS

A revised plan for visitor use at Chalmette was needed to reflect the new information about the battlefield and to adjust developments in response to the changed feature locations. The following goals guided the new planning effort:

Maximize protection of known and suspected historic resources.

Where possible, remove existing and avoid additional visual intrusions in the most significant battlefield areas (i.e., the area of Gibbs' advance toward batteries 7 and 8 in the vicinity of the northern portion of the tour road, and the area of Rennie's advance along the levee road).

Provide a reasonable pattern for visitor circulation.

Provide a logical, understandable sequence of interpretation.

VISITOR USE, INTERPRETATION, AND DEVELOPMENT

Visitors will enter the park as they do now along the west side of the battlefield (See the General Management Plan / Development Concept Plan.). Signing and redesign of the entry road will encourage them to proceed to a parking area and interpretive center located near the Chalmette monument. A new interpretive wayside exhibit will be located in the vicinity of batteries 7 and 8 near the park entrance. A turnout and parking for this wayside will be separated from vehicles entering the park by a traffic island, so that arriving visitors will be directed first to the interpretive center. The National Park Service will also work with the State of Louisiana and St. Bernard Parish, prior to design of the entry road modifications, to address safety problems at the intersection of the entry road and State Route 46.

At the interpretive center visitors will receive an historical overview of the campaign, battles, and their significance. Walkways from this area will lead along the American rampart to batteries 4, 5 and 6, and to the site of the Rodriguez House, to batteries 2 and 3, and to the Beauregard House. Wayside interpretive exhibits will be located at these sites; interpretation at the Beauregard House is described below. An artillery exhibit will be developed at battery 4.

The tour road will remain and the one-way circulation pattern will not change. The present turnout, located at a central point along the line of British battle positions, will be enlarged slightly to accommodate mobility-impaired visitors and to allow the placement of up to three wayside exhibits. These improvements will enable visitors to better visualize the battlefield from the British perspective. A wayside exhibit will interpret British aspects of the battle. A short trail will lead from this turnout to the Center Road and the site of the British advance battery, and

wayside exhibits will be located at each site. Wayside exhibits, including maps and other graphics, will interpret historic events at the turnouts along the tour road. Any ground-disturbing modifications along the road will require archeological clearance.

The forested area between the northern section of the tour road and the park boundary will eventually be removed. However, due to the historic significance of the area and the possibility of extant subsurface resources, a landscape plan will be prepared to guide vegetation removal, as well as subsequent planting and maintenance activities.

After visiting the battlefield, visitors could go to the Beauregard House. Interpretive exhibits on the first floor will place the battlefield in its historical context. Interpretive themes for these exhibits will treat the Battle of New Orleans as one campaign in the War of 1812 and will describe the history of the battlefield prior to and following the battle to provide visitors with an understanding of the contemporary landscape as the result of combined natural and human processes.

All new or rehabilitated facilities for visitor use or park administration, and all park interpretive programs, will be accessible to the mobility impaired. All interpretive media developments will be usable by visitors with sensory handicaps.

SYSTEMATICALLY SURVEY
SUBSURFACE RESOURCES
AND REMOVE TREES
AND SHRUBS

PROPOSED
TRAFFIC
ISLAND

PARKING AREA
AND BATTERIES
7 AND 8 WAYSIDE

BATTERY 4
ARTILLERY EXHIBIT

BATTERY 4
MONUMENT

INTERPRETIVE
CENTER

PARKING

COMFORT
STATION

RODRIGUEZ HOUSE
WAYSIDE

LEVEE

BATTERIES 2 AND 3
WAYSIDE

CENTER
ROAD
WAYSIDE

3 BRITISH
WAYSIDES

ENLARGE
PARKING AREA

BRITISH
ADVANCE
BATTERY
WAYSIDE

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- PARKING AREA
- TURNOUT TO BE OBLITERATED
- TRAIL
- INTERPRETIVE WAYSIDE
- VEGETATIVE SCREEN



EXISTING DEVELOPMENT

- RIVER
- SIGN
- ROAD
- DRAINAGE
- UTILITIES



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FEET

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GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN

CHALMETTE UNIT

JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DEVELOPMENT COSTS AND PHASING

Phase/Development Items	Size	Cost
1. Utilities		
Install fire protection system	water line & fire hydrant	\$ 22,000
Install underground electric lines	1800 ft.	29,000
Remove overhead electric lines	1800 ft.	7,000
Subtotal		\$ 58,000
2. Tour and Service Roads		
Expand parking area	0.2 ac.	10,000
Reconstruct intersection	450 sq. yd.	24,000
Subtotal		\$ 34,000
3. Entrance Road		
Reconstruct entrance, including traffic island	500 ft.	\$ 60,000
Construct parking area	15 cars & 2 buses	33,000
Obliterate and restore two parking areas	450 sq. yd.	9,000
Subtotal		\$ 102,000
4. Wayside Exhibits		
Produce and install exhibits	6 sites	\$ 15,000
5. Landscaping		
Remove trees and shrubs	9 ac.	\$ 63,000
Plant trees	50 trees	17,000
Subtotal		\$ 95,000
Net Construction Costs		\$ 289,000
Gross Construction Costs		\$ 378,600 *

* Gross costs include 31 percent of net construction costs to cover project supervision and contingencies. Additional project planning and design costs (average 15% of net construction costs) are omitted since they are not funded from line-item construction accounts.

RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Due to the absence of recorded information on the original furnishings of the Beauregard House and the NPS policy against using comparable furnishings from an historic period, the house cannot be furnished to NPS standards at present. Full restoration of the building exterior faces the same difficulty. Therefore, at this time, the interior will be adaptively used and the exterior will be preserved.

Continuing research projects will provide information that is necessary to support planning for site-related interpretation and to further develop the park's resource data base. Future research will be phased to coincide with the priorities for implementation of the interpretive and management proposals for the Chalmette unit. Some of the archeological research needs can be addressed through the archeological clearance investigations associated with planned interpretive developments.

Following is a list of archeological survey projects that address specific needs.

1. Archeological tests at the Rodriguez Estate are necessary to better define the size and limits of the secondary residence (the smaller eastern residence). These tests are also important in order to obtain more accurate information on the appearance of the main house at the time of the battle.
2. Contour maps of the Center Road and the British advance battery location need to be revised and updated, both as basic documentation of these features and as an aid to interpretive planning. This work should be followed by an additional non-destructive soil-augering program to document the subsurface characteristics of these features.
3. Research on artillery is necessary so that the park can begin obtaining additional artillery pieces for the battery exhibits.

Historical research needs to be conducted on the roles that the Rodriguez, Macarty, Chalmette, and other plantations played during the battle. More complete domestic histories of these estates should be prepared for use in interpretation of the Beauregard House and of the eighteenth and nineteenth century history of St. Bernard Parish. Limited archeological testing at the location of the newly found Spanish Colonial plantation house could also help to shed light on this important discovery.

Historical research on the wider framework of the battle, outside the park proper, will continue. As new information comes to light it will be included in the interpretive program where appropriate.

More historical research needs to be conducted on the battle to identify uniforms and equipment, to record histories of individual units and

biographies of important persons involved, and to document involvement of Choctaw Indians in the battle.

The reconstructed rampart will be preserved in accordance with appropriate preservation law and guidelines. Specific interpretive/preservation projects will be programmed to meet management and interpretive goals.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Battlefield vegetation will be maintained to simulate rough field conditions, and attempts to stop the deterioration of the live oak and pecan trees will continue. The northern portion of the battlefield, currently in second-growth forest (approximately 30 years old), will be cleared to more accurately portray historic conditions. Based on data available at the time, the 1982 general management plan (GMP) erroneously identified the area as a "former cypress swamp." Only the very northern edge of the present second-growth forest along the park boundary was a cypress swamp at the time of the Battle of New Orleans; approximately ninety percent of the present forest was an open sugar cane field. However, historic accounts, aerial photography, and the existing vegetation substantiate the current belief that, in all probability, the area was not a wetland at the time of the battle. Moist soils in the area are apparently caused by incidental impoundment by the nearby railroad grade and ineffective drainage. Further detailed studies will be completed to develop methods for improving drainage and appropriate measures will then be implemented. With the exception of a vegetative screen along the adjacent railroad right-of-way, trees and undergrowth will be removed and grasses will be planted and maintained to simulate rough field conditions. By taking these actions, the National Park Service will remove the second-growth forest between the northern boundary of the battlefield and the tour road and will endeavor to reestablish the historic landscape of the period.

Research will be conducted on air pollution and its effect on the unit's vegetation and cultural resources. The visual intrusiveness of adjacent industry will be mitigated by additional vegetative screening. The existing sewage treatment facility owned and operated by St. Bernard Parish is located on the historic battlefield within the Chalmette National Historic Park. The treatment plant is incompatible with the park's historic integrity and with public use and enjoyment. The National Park Service will encourage St. Bernard Parish to paint the sewage disposal plant in a color that blends with its immediate environment, and will encourage the parish to relocate the facility away from the battlefield. When this facility becomes obsolete, it will be acquired and removed. Overhead powerlines will be placed underground and adequate waterlines will be provided for fire protection.



MANAGEMENT ZONING

CULTURAL RESOURCES ZONE

This zone coincides with the boundary that delimits this National Register property (See Management Zoning). Management emphasis is upon preservation, protection, and interpretation of the cultural resources, including the setting, that occur within the unit boundary.

There are three subzones. Resources included in the preservation subzone are the battlefield proper, the Rodriguez Canal, the mud rampart, the Rodriguez House, and the eighteenth century Plantation House. The adaptive use subzone includes the Beauregard House and a two-story brick structure located in the adjacent national cemetery. These structures have been modified -- the former for visitor use, the latter for administrative office space. The Chalmette National Cemetery and the Chalmette Battlefield Monument are included in the commemoration subzone and will be managed to maintain a commemorative setting rather than a particular historic period.

PARK DEVELOPMENT ZONE

This zone encompasses the area where visitor use and facilities alter cultural resources and/or the setting. Facilities provide for visitor use and for operation of the unit.

There are three subzones. The maintenance area located in the national cemetery is included in the administrative subzone. The existing visitor use and interpretive facilities provided at tour road waysides, the interpretive center, and the Beauregard House are included in the education/interpretive subzone; additional facilities to be included are the new wayside exhibits, trails, and walkways. Unit roads, including the battlefield and cemetery entrances, the tour road, wayside turnouts, battlefield parking area, and graveled haul road comprise the access/circulation subzone.

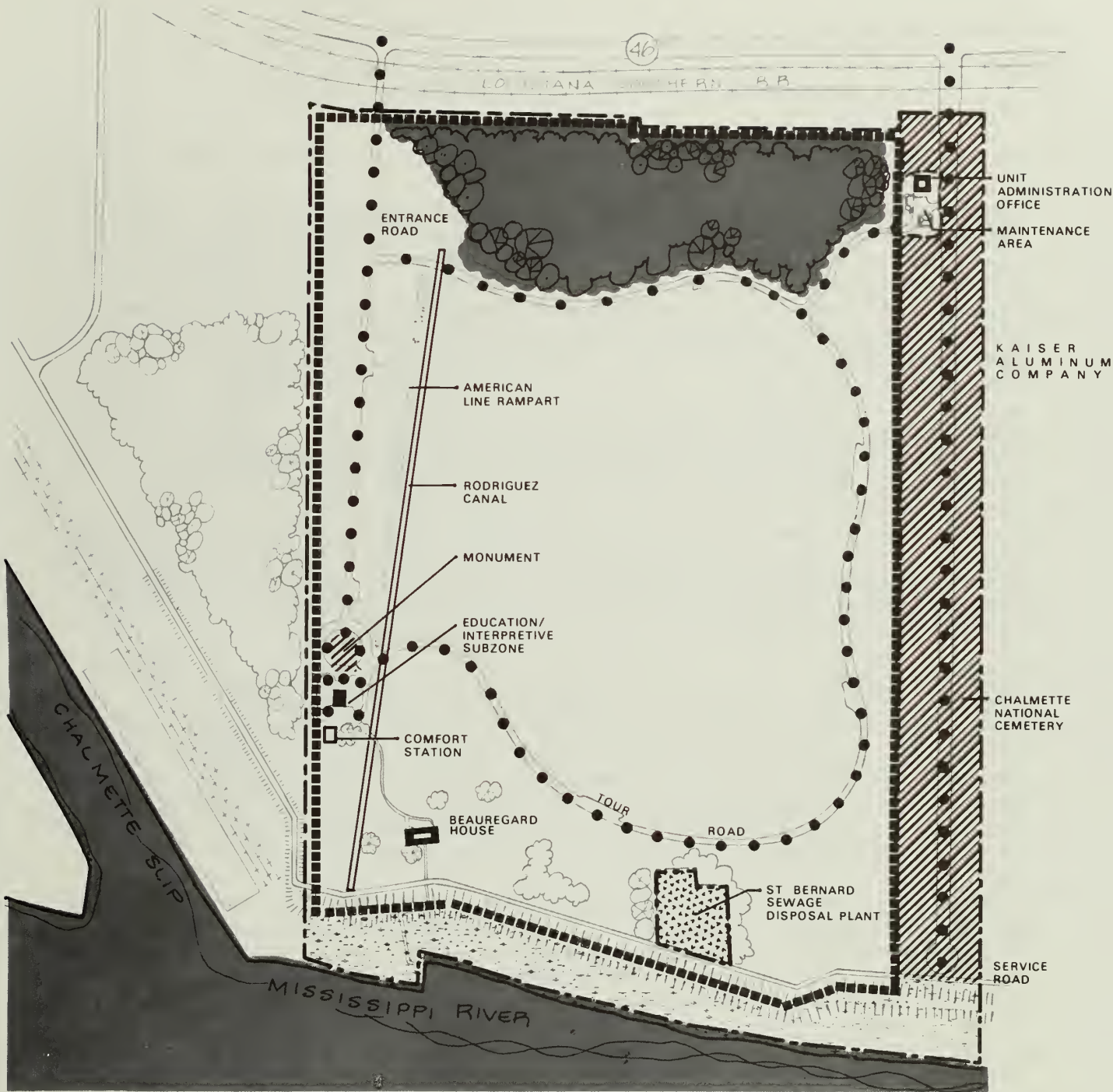
OTHER USE ZONES

Lands owned by St. Bernard Parish and used for a sewage disposal plant are included in the utilities subzone. The levee protection subzone is comprised of a man-made levee that abuts the unit's southern boundary adjacent to the Mississippi River; management is shared through agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Lake Borgne Levee District.

SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ZONES
CHALMETTE UNIT

<u>Zone/Subzone</u>	<u>Total Acreage of Zone</u>	<u>Percent of Total Unit Acreage</u>
Cultural Resources Zone		
Preservation Subzone	111.0	77.8
Adaptive Use Subzone	0.2	0.1
Commemoration Subzone	17.3	12.0
Park Development Zone		
Administrative Subzone	0.2	0.1
Education/Interpretive Subzone	1.0	0.8
Access/Circulation Subzone	3.1	2.2
Other Use Zones		
Utilities Subzone	1.5	1.0
Levee Protection Subzone	8.6	6.0
TOTALS	<u>142.9</u>	<u>100.0</u>





CULTURAL RESOURCES ZONE

PRESERVATION SUBZONE



ADAPTIVE USE SUBZONE



COMMEMORATION SUBZONE



PARK DEVELOPMENT ZONE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUBZONE



EDUCATION / INTERPRETIVE SUBZONE



ACCESS / CIRCULATION



OTHER USE ZONE

UTILITIES SUBZONE



LEVEE PROTECTION SUBZONE



0 100 300 FEET

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MANAGEMENT ZONING

CHALMETTE UNIT
JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

COMPLIANCE ACTIONS AND MITIGATION OF DEVELOPMENT

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Because the proposals called for in this plan amendment differ from those approved in the park's 1982 GMP/DCP, additional compliance with section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act was necessary to supplement that previously completed on the GMP. In early 1984, the National Park Service found it necessary to ensure that the proposed interpretive center was in place prior to the opening of the New Orleans' Worlds Fair. Accordingly, compliance with section 106 for that element of this plan amendment was completed at that time. Under the programmatic memorandum of agreement between the National Park Service, the Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPO), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), the Louisiana SHPO and the ACHP have reviewed this GMP amendment and have no objection to implementation of the amended plan.

Construction of new parking and interpretive exhibits will require archeological testing where construction may affect unknown subsurface resources, and specifically near the Rodriguez Canal and several battle-related ditches. These ditches may have trapped artifacts lost by participants in the battle.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Due to the discovery that the forested area on the northern portion of the battlefield is "secondary growth," not a "former cypress swamp," this plan amendment calls for removal of most trees and undergrowth in the nine-acre area in order to return the area to the rough field conditions present during the battle. While the area was not inundated with water at the time, the construction of the nearby railroad grade later caused impoundment of water.

Federal agencies are directed by Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands, to avoid development in wetlands wherever there is a practicable alternative and to avoid adverse impacts associated with the occupancy, modification, or destruction of wetlands to the extent possible. This plan amendment proposes modification of a manmade impoundment to portray the historic condition of a nationally significant battlefield in accordance with various legislative mandates to preserve, protect, and interpret the cultural resources and historic setting of the area. Therefore, options for conducting these management activities outside of the wet area are nonexistent. In order to mitigate any potential impacts, the National Park Service consulted with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1987 and received a determination that the area in question is not a wetland. Since that evaluation, the railroad company cleared ditches in the area and drained the impoundment. In January 1989, the regulatory program definition of wetlands was revised, so the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be consulted again prior to removing vegetation and implementing the NPS landscape plan.

In accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, the National Park Service has determined, following informal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, that implementation of this plan amendment will have no effect on federally protected species or critical habitat.

SELECTED REFERENCES

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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- Undated "The Search for the Lost Riverfront," by Terje Birkedal. An unpublished manuscript on file at the Southwest Regional Office.

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